

MINUTES OF AUGUST 8, 2000
PARAMEDIC TASK FORCE MEETING
Alameda County EMS Agency
Oakland, CA

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>EMSA STAFF PRESENT</u>	<u>ALTERNATES PRESENT</u>	<u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u>	<u>ALTERNATES ABSENT</u>
Debbie Becker Bill Cody Sabina Imrie Jan Ogar Kevin White	Nancy Steiner Sean Trask Richard Watson	Mike Metro Nancy Eubanks	Dean Anderson Bill Bower Carol Gunter Jim Holbrook Bill Koenig Marshall Morton Tony Pallitto Kevin Ritger Kathy Sher Sam Stratton	Linda Anderson Michael Harris Nancy Justin Dave Magnino Dick Mayberry David Nevins Frank Pratt

I Review and Approval of June 20, 2000 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved with no changes.

II Setting of the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

III Continuing Education

-Review of Ideas/Concepts

The Paramedic Task Force (PTF) continued with discussion on continuing education (CE) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). The members agreed that monitoring skills and knowledge competency should be the responsibility of the employing agency as part of the CQI process. They also agreed the CE should be educational, an enhancement of the knowledge base, and that CE courses should include course objectives, didactic component, measurable objectives, and that if competency is validated by the employing agency through a CQI process, the current restrictions on CE could be eliminated.

The PTF focused their discussion on the CQI process. Some of the discussion included the following comments:

- Focus should be to define what CQI is supposed to accomplish.
- An individual should be identified as responsible for a CQI program within a service agency.
- A CQI program needs to demonstrate that certain types of competencies are achieved with personnel. How that is accomplished should be up to the provider to decide.
- The regulations should say that the CQI program should include measurement of outcome and establishing benchmarks.
- The definition of CQI in Section 100136 of the regulations may need to be redefined.
- We should focus on both problems and solve them, and on maintenance of minimum level of competency. The way this section reads now is just focusing on solving problems.
- The IAFF EMS booklet discusses a variety of performance measures, both for the system and the individuals operating within the system. We could use this as a template for what the PTF is trying to accomplish.
- One of the problems with CQI programs as they exist now is that they use questionable data to meet questionable benchmarks.
- CQI needs structure and a framework in place which allows agencies affected to decide what they need to do.
- CQI needs confidentiality protection and requirements for performance indicators.

- We need to identify a way to collect the data needed to develop performance indicators.
- The IAFF document lists 9 performance objectives: call processing time, response time, time to task, protocol compliance, patient outcome, defibrillator availability, employee retention, and public opinion.
- We need to expand the CQI Program, Section 100172, of the paramedic regulations.
- A CQI program should evaluate the entire system, not just the individuals within the system.
- CQI standards need to be developed.
- In the July 2000 JEMS magazine there is an article "Counting Quality Improvement" which talks about statistical process control in order to measure your quality and how to accomplish the measurement. The regulations should say that you have to measure; how you measure is part of getting your program accredited.
- Would like to caution on some of the performance objectives, such as response time. Response time is a public policy decision. To have a non-elected body mandate response time standards will put more obligations on the provider. An unfunded mandate.
- Sarasota Co., Florida won the state equivalent of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for their CQI process. The concept revolves around a self assessment and to meet a certain set of criteria and what's included in the documentation for that. Then you can evaluate yourself relative to a standard and develop a plan to move toward that standard. Once you do all of this, you turn your documentation over to a review committee, and the review committee reviews the documentation and then does a site assessment.
- The regulations could reference guidelines for developing a CQI process such as the IAFF Guidelines, or the Baldrige categories listed in the NHTSA Quality Improvement Guidelines.
- The regulations need to be written in such a way to accommodate the smaller ambulance companies.
- The definition for quality improvement from the IAFF Guide Book is, "The sum of all activities undertaken to continuously examine and improve the products and services. Quality Improvement activities are described as being prospective, concurrent, or retrospective, depending on when they are conducted relative to an event".

Some of the components of a CQI plan that the PTF agreed on should include:

- A CQI program should have prospective, concurrent and retrospective reviews, with indicators established.
- Requiring a CQI director at the provider level who has the knowledge, experience and ability to implement a CQI program with the following components:
 - The 8 components listed in the July 2000 JEMS Magazine which includes: Statistical review, Investigational reviews, Controlled substance systems, Regulatory compliance systems, Billing (utilization) review systems, Equipment and procedure review, Research & development systems and Training development systems.

Action/Agenda items for next meeting:

The PTF members will review the following reference materials for the next meeting:

Wheeler Book - Understanding Variation - Key to Managing Chaos
NHTSA Document - Leadership Guide to Quality Improvement for Medical Services
Baldrige Process
IAFF Guide Book-Chapter 3
JEMS Article-July 2000
JEMS Article-1999
CQI in EMS by the American College of Emergency Physicians

Kevin White will get copies of the IAFF EMS Guide Book for the PTF members to review.
Mike Metro will give a presentation on the CE and CQI components of the Los Angeles IAFF EMS system accreditation model at a future PTF meeting.
Nancy Eubanks will bring the book CQI in EMS by ACEP to the next meeting.

IV Adjournment

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The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held in Burbank on September 5, 2000. The following meeting will be held October 31, 2000 in the north.